

INFORMATION REPORT - INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	China	REPORT	25X1
SUBJECT	Cost of Living and Business Conditions in Canton	DATE DISTR.	16 December 1955
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1. [redacted] the cost of living in Canton was about the same as it was in Hong Kong. Foodstuffs available in Canton, however, were of inferior quality to those available in Hong Kong. Bread was grey in color and rice was third- or fourth-grade. People had to stand in line to purchase meat. Prices of canned goods were higher in Canton than they were in Hong Kong. The price of pork canned in Canton was twice as high in Canton as it was in Hong Kong.
2. There were few privately-owned restaurants in Canton. Many owners had turned over their restaurants voluntarily to the government because of high taxes and periodic government levies. Restaurants did little business on weekdays but were crowded on Sundays.
3. The manager of the Canton branch of a large Chinese banking corporation received a salary of 120 yuan per month; other employees received salaries from 60 to 80 yuan per month. The employees had received no salary increases since the Communists took over control of China. They were not permitted to resign and their former privilege of purchasing foodstuffs at special prices had been taken away from them. Further complaints of employees were that they had to attend numerous meetings and lectures, could not speak freely for fear of informers, and all employees, even the manager, had to assist in such lowly tasks as mopping the floors of the bank.

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